



## GED® TESTING IN CORRECTIONAL SETTINGS

### FINDING ANSWERS

Hello. My name is Rae Smith and I work in the Kentucky GED® testing office. Today we are going to talk about GED® testing in correctional settings.

When the announcement was made in 2011 that the GED® test was going to become a computer-based test in 2014, one of the most often voiced concerns was about how a computer-based test could be delivered in a correctional setting. In fact, as the new Pearson team began to tour the country to learn about GED® testing, every state took them to prisons and jails to show them the challenges of testing inside correctional facilities.



We had questions and concerns. In the nearly three years since that first announcement, we have been able to address most of the issues associated with testing in jails and prisons.

First, let's remember, the GED® test is a computer-based test, but it is not on the Internet. Most jails and prisons already have Internet access in their administrative areas for a number of different functions. The only Internet access needed for the GED® test is for an administrative computer. That computer can either be in an administrative area of the facility or even in a different facility miles away. Test-taker computers are never connected to the Internet. In fact, the GED® test system disables all Internet access to test-taker computers, such as Wi-Fi, while the test is in progress.

Some issues such as administering the GED Ready™ test in corrections and paying for the test in corrections have already been addressed in earlier Webinars but I can touch on them again if needed. To help me direct the Webinar, what are your questions and concerns?

I will also have a time for questions at the end.



QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

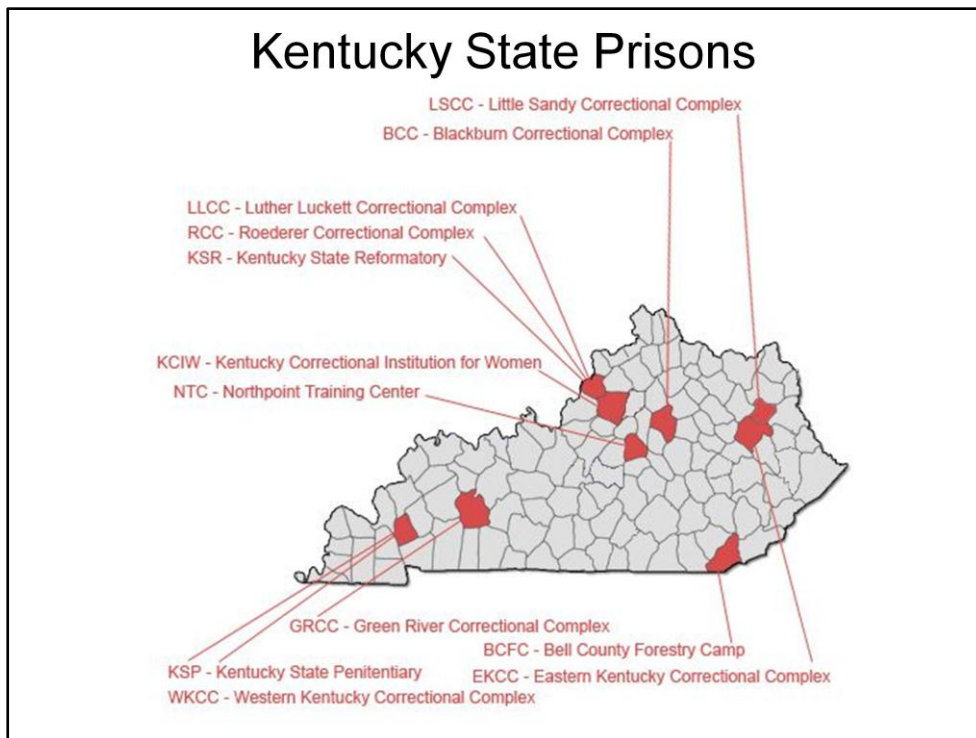


With the announcement that the 2014 GED® test would be a computer-based test, there was a lot of discussion about whether correctional centers should be allowed to continue testing on paper rather than adopting computer testing. In early 2013, GED Testing Service® offered an option called a “Transitional Waiver” that would allow facilities to continue testing on paper if the state identified the facilities, applied to GED Testing Service® and wrote a plan to move quickly to computer testing.

We were asked, as a state, whether we wanted to participate in this program and were told to reply by March 2013. There were no costs provided for the paper testing nor were any decisions made about the version of the GED® test that would be offered through this program. We met with the State Department of Corrections and members of the jailer’s association. The State Department of Corrections assured us they had the infrastructure in place and were ready to proceed with computer testing. The jailer’s association representatives also thought there was no advantage to delaying the inevitable transition to computer testing.

Therefore, Kentucky did not participate in the Transitional Waiver program. **There is not an option in Kentucky to offer the GED® test on paper in our jails and prisons.** And, in hindsight, I believe this was a good decision. Ultimately, the version of the GED® test that is offered as a part of this program is the 2002 GED® test, which of course, cannot be combined with any of the 2014 computer scores and requires the maintenance of a separate testing system. Also, the program requires regular reporting

from the institutions about how they plan to transition to the computer test. So, in Kentucky, we choose to move forward instead of delaying progress to the new test.



As the Kentucky Department of Corrections indicated in their meetings with us, they had the infrastructure in place and all the state prisons have become Pearson VUE testing centers for the purpose of offering the GED® test inside their facilities. They are all ready to go and are gearing up their instructional programs to begin administering the GED Ready® test and begin GED® testing. They have begun to flip the switch on their testing centers and activate them.

In addition, the one private prison in Kentucky, Lee Adjustment Center, is being served as a mobile site by Jackson County Board of Education.



Breathitt Regional Juvenile Detention  
Center

The state Regional Juvenile Detention Centers have also decided to become Pearson VUE testing centers. We have worked through the Department of Juvenile Justice to communicate with these centers. The centers at Breathitt and Adair are already activated. Breathitt has already delivered tests.

A number of other juvenile detention centers are also in the process of becoming testing centers.





The local jails were another issue. Some jails didn't even have facilities sufficient for paper testing. And of course, jailers are elected local officials and as a result some rules and concerns vary from facility to facility.

At the recommendation of representatives from the jailer's association board, we addressed the jailers directly at their annual meeting in July 2013 to provide them with the information about the changes coming to the GED® test and their options for continuing or adding testing at their local jail. We followed up in writing to every jailer with a summary of the information provided at the meeting. We encouraged the jailers to move forward with the change in 2013 so things would be in place by 2014. We even followed up with letters to the jailers at facilities that regularly offered the paper GED® test.

In August 2013, we also followed up with all adult education directors at the regional meetings to explain the options available to the jails and the role adult educators could play in this transition. We knew, as a practical matter, that the person who comes into the jail to provide instruction is the person the jailer would turn to for information and assistance regarding GED® testing and we wanted the adult education programs to have the correct information.

While a few jails did respond and began the process in 2013, most waited until 2014 to begin in earnest and many still need our encouragement and assistance.





- ❑ Become a Pearson VUE Testing Center
- ❑ Transport Inmates to a Correctional Facility that is a Pearson VUE Testing Center
- ❑ Contract with a public Pearson VUE/GED Testing Center to become a mobile site

Here are the options correctional centers have for offering the GED® test.

There is a handout posted on our website and linked at the end of the presentation that details each option.

Let's go over how these options are being implemented by the local jails in Kentucky.

After we go over all three options and the advantages and disadvantages of each, we will go through the steps a facility takes if they want to become a testing center.



## Louisville Metro Corrections Pearson VUE Testing Center

The first option is for the jail to become its own Pearson VUE testing center.

That is the option taken by the State Department of Corrections and a number of Kentucky jails including Louisville Metro Corrections.

There is no cost to the jail to become a Pearson VUE center—nothing to buy from Pearson and no fees to pay.



Hardin County Detention Center  
Pearson VUE Testing Center

- No fees
- Reduce overall cost of test
  - \$80 vs \$120 for full test
  - \$20 vs \$30 for each of four modules
  - free retakes for up to two additional attempts per module
- Ability to offer test more frequently and to fewer test-takers.

Hardin County Detention Center is also a Pearson VUE Testing center. This slide lists the advantages of a jail becoming a Pearson VUE center for the purpose of offering the GED® test.



- ❑ Must dedicate staff to act as Pearson Test Administrator
- ❑ Must provide computer for testing or collaborate with adult education for equipment

Here are the disadvantages of becoming a Pearson Testing Center.

- Must have someone as Test Administrator or proctor. We will cover those requirements a little later in the presentation.
- Need administrative computer and test-taker computers. This is where you can help. If you have not already done so, you need to transition your instruction to computer. If you are using or purchasing computers for instruction, make sure the computers meet the Pearson requirements for testing and these same computers can be used for the GED® test.

Remember, a large number of computers are not needed. Testing can start with as few as two computers.



### Transport Inmates for Testing

- ❑ Transport to another correctional facility
- ❑ Jail staff needed for transport and supervision
- ❑ Test cost \$120 (\$30 per module)
- ❑ Pearson VUE Testing Center may charge additional administrative fee
- ❑ Must enter into written agreement to establish fees and dates

The next option is to transport inmates for testing. This means transport to another correctional facility that is offering the GED® test.

The option of transporting inmates to a public test center was not a good one for the paper test and is even more problematic for the computer test. Many testing centers are offering a variety of professional certifications and academic testing at the same time the GED® test is offered and shackled inmates could not be admitted at these centers. A number of college campuses do not allow inmates to come to their center for this purpose.

With this option, no jail staff is needed for test registration or administration and no test-taker computers are required. The disadvantages of this option are listed on the slide above.

- ❑ Each full test costs \$120 (\$30 for each module)
- ❑ Jail may have to pay an additional administrative fee to have test delivered at their facility
- ❑ Must allow testing center to bring computer(s) into the facility
- ❑ Must enter into a written agreement



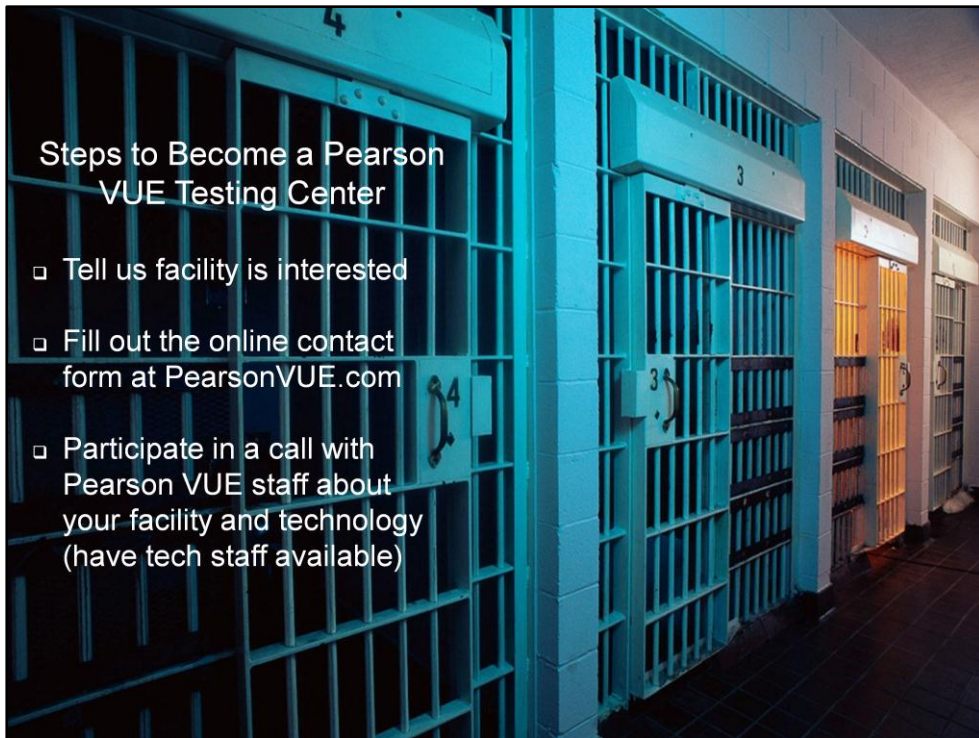
Barren County Detention Center  
Mobile Testing Site for SKYCTC

The third option is for the facility to contract with a public Pearson VUE/GED® Testing Center to deliver the test in their facility.

Barren County Detention Center has taken this option. Southcentral Community and Technical College will serve the Barren County Detention center as a mobile site.

No jail staff is needed for test administration. The disadvantages of this option are listed on the slide above.





### Steps to Become a Pearson VUE Testing Center


- Tell us facility is interested
- Fill out the online contact form at [PearsonVUE.com](http://PearsonVUE.com)
- Participate in a call with Pearson VUE staff about your facility and technology (have tech staff available)

If a jail decides to become a Pearson VUE testing center for the purpose of offering the GED® test, here are the steps. These steps are also on a handout available on the KYAE website and linked at the end of this presentation.

#### Steps

1. Tell us you are interested by emailing [GED@ky.gov](mailto:GED@ky.gov)
2. Fill out the online contact form at [www.pearsonvue.com/corrections/contact/](http://www.pearsonvue.com/corrections/contact/)
3. Staff from Pearson VUE/GED Testing Service® will call you to discuss your facility and technology -- **have your technology staff available to help with this call.**



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- ❑ Sign the testing agreement and return it
  - ❑ Install the Pearson VUE software on your administrative computer
  - ❑ Take the free test administrator exam
  - ❑ Activate your site and deliver GED® test


4. Sign the testing agreement and return it.
5. Install the Pearson VUE software on your administrative computer.
6. Take the free test administrator exam.
7. Activate your site and deliver GED® test.



## Equipment and Facility Requirements

Below is the equipment and facility requirements a jail has for becoming a Pearson VUE center. These requirements are also on the handout.

- ☐ Administrative computer connected to internet.
- ☐ Administrative computer located away from the test-takers; may be locked away when not in use for testing.
- ☐ Proctor must be able to view the test-takers either by being in the same room, through clear glass viewing, or live feed video surveillance.
- ☐ Can start with as few as two computers.
- ☐ Computers for test-takers are never connected to the Internet. Laptop computers can be used as long as they meet Pearson requirements.



### Pearson VUE Test Administrator

- ❑ High school credential
- ❑ Not involved in GED® instruction
- ❑ Pass open book Pearson exam
- ❑ Technology skills to enter inmate information online, connect networked computers, deliver and proctor tests

If a facility decides to become a Pearson VUE testing center, someone at the jail will have to become a Pearson VUE Test Administrator.

This person has to have a high school diploma or GED diploma, have the ability to pass the open book Pearson test administrator test and the technical ability to deliver the test. This could be a member of the administrative support staff or some jails have selected the class D administrator. With the savings the jail would see in the test fee, it might even be feasible for the jail to hire someone from the community to do this job on a part time basis.

Just as with the paper test, **the adult educator cannot be a Test Administrator.**



Fayette County Detention Center

This is the Fayette County Detention Center. I chose the picture because it is an attractive facility. Fayette County Detention Center contacted me last summer about becoming a testing center, but stalled.

This happened with a number of jails and for a number of different reasons.

This spring I asked our regional staff to help me follow up with the jails. What we found was that most of the jailers were aware of the change in the GED® test and the options but had not acted. Some of those that had begun, had stalled or needed additional direction.

As a result of this effort, we have been able to help some of these jails move forward.

However, we also need you to be aware of the options and make sure that the person who goes to that jail to provide instructions knows the true options.

Here is what you and your instructors at the jail can do.

- Transition instruction to computer
- Teach to the standards
- Follow up
- Direct to options and steps
- Collaborate on computer purchases



This slide shows the things adult educators can do to help a jail offer the 2014 GED® test.

# QUESTIONS



## Thank you

Handout at

<http://kyae.ky.gov/educators/GEDhottopics.htm>

Ask questions at GED@KY.gov

Find your handout at <http://kyae.ky.gov/educators/GEDhottopics.htm>.

If you have questions, please email them to GED@KY.gov.

Questions and answers will be posted on the KYAE website at  
<http://kyae.ky.gov/educators/GEDhottopics.htm>.